

Subject:- "STATUS OF SALT PANS SURVEY AND CONSERVATION POLICY"

Unstarred LAQ No.165 tabled by Shri.Viresh Borkar, MLA to be answered on 08/08/2025.

QUESTION

ANSWER

165. WILL the Minister for Environment & Climate Change be pleased to State:

By Shri. Aleixo Sequeira,
Hon'ble Minister for Environment & Climate Change.

(a) whether the Department of Environment or the Goa State Biodiversity Board (GSBB) has received any written or verbal direction from the Hon ble Chief Minister of Goa to conduct a comprehensive survey and formulate a conservation policy for traditional salt pans in the State; if so, furnish certified copies of all such communication, file notings, meeting minutes and directions received;

Yes Sir, The Council of Ministers, discussed regarding Salt Pan Cultivation and related subject along with the support scheme and decided to transfer the subject from Department of Industries, Trade and Commerce (DITC) to Goa State Biodiversity Board (GSBB) during the LXIIIrd Cabinet Meeting of the Council Of Ministers held on 06/02/2025 . Hence, Task Committee Team is being constituted on salt pans. Copies of the relevant communications, file notings, and directions are attached at **Annexure "A"**.

(b) whether the GSBB has undertaken a full survey of salt pans across the State; if so, the details of the number of salt pans surveyed (taluka-wise), area covered under the survey, classification (active/inactive), Ownership status (private/public/community), copies of the survey report and findings;

Yes Sir, a comprehensive survey of salt pans across the State of Goa was conducted by the Directorate of Industries, Trade and Commerce (DITC) in August 2024, and the data was formally shared with Goa State Biodiversity Board (GSBB).

Goa State Biodiversity Board (GSBB) has also initiated field-level data collection and verification through Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs).

The taluka-wise details of salt pans, including area, activity status (active/inactive), and ownership classification (private/public/community), are compiled and attached at **Annexure "B"**.

GSBB, written to the Land Survey Department requesting all relevant details, and to the Water Resources Department (WRD). A copy of this letter is attached at **Annexure "C"**.

- (c) the current status of the salt pan Conservation Policy being drafted by the Department/GSBB; whether a draft has been prepared, if so, whether it has been circulated for inter-departmental or public consultation;

Sir, the process is ongoing under the Special Task Committee. The draft is currently under review for expert inputs and stakeholder consultations. The draft will be circulated for inter-departmental consultation and subsequently submitted for approval by the Government.

- (d) the list of experts, scientific institutions or agencies (e.g. Goa University, CSMCRI, etc.) involved in the survey and policy formulation; with their names, roles, affiliations and scope of work assigned to each; and

Sir, the list of members of the Special Task Committee on Salt Pans is attached at **Annexure "D"**.

- (e) the process that is being followed for the survey and policy drafting, including the expected time frame for completion of the entire exercise and the steps proposed thereafter for implementation and protection of the salt pans?

Sir, The Government of Goa, through the Goa State Biodiversity Board (GSBB), has initiated a comprehensive effort towards the revival, conservation, and policy formulation for salt pans and associated *Khazan* ecosystems in the state. The formation of the Task Force has been completed, and we are in the process of preliminary consultations, survey and ground-truthing, and seeking support from industry and academia. Preliminary discussions have also been held with industry representatives for potential salt buyback mechanisms. Dr. Savita Kerkar is an expert member of the Task Team (volunteer) and has provided support.